



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
550 MAIN STREET
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

EDDIE A. PEREZ
MAYOR

TELEPHONE: (860) 543-8500
FAX: (860) 722-6606

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Contact: Billie C. Scruse, Press Secretary

MAYOR PEREZ LEADERSHIP STRATEGY STAYS ON COURSE

HARTFORD, CT - During his State of the City Address in March of this year, Mayor Eddie Perez promised to commit himself to our House of Hope. "Now that our house is standing strong, we must turn our attention to the people who live within it. We must reinvest in our human capital," said Perez.

Mayor Perez has done just that by making an investment in City Hall and Hartford's executive leadership team to develop and implement a three year strategic business planning process. By creating a structural plan, the City can effectively focus on building a cohesive vision, mission and strategy that will guide its resurgence as a vital, healthy and safe place to live and work.

"Significant changes in the last two years have called for a new vision for the City of Hartford — a new governance model resulting in a "strong mayor" form of government, management structure, and a reduction in the city's workforce," said Perez.

Mayor Perez requested and received a grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to fund the initial critical steps of the three year effort. In order to achieve significant improvements and positive change, Mayor Perez and Chief Operating Officer Lee Erdmann believe that the City must develop an internal culture with a greater focus on quality. This means behavioral changes in attitude and the introduction of new knowledge and skills.

To accomplish this goal, the Strategic Business Plan was built upon the principles of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria for Performance Excellence. The

Baldrige model has been used by many forward-thinking organizations as an effective framework to plan in an uncertain environment; assess the performance of key business indicators; align resources and approaches; improve communication, productivity and effectiveness and achieve strategic goals.

By achieving quality improvements in the areas of leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management and business results, the City of Hartford is setting the stage for its own performance excellence.

And progress is being made in the following areas: (1) **Strategic Planning** – citywide vision, mission, goals, department strategies and objectives have been set for 2004-2005; (2) **Leadership** - an intensive ‘Leadership for Performance Excellence’ program was conducted to expand organizational and personal learning; (3) **Human Resource Focus** – the foundation of a performance management system and performance measures are well under way; and (4) **Process Management** – key process improvement programs are being delivered to City leaders and staffs.

Lillian Ruiz, Director of Human Relations says, “The leadership assessment was a new experience for me. It was the first time in my career that I was able to analyze myself, and to get a true perspective about my management style and communication skills.”

Oversight for this project is being performed by the Connecticut Quality Council (CQC), a non-profit, member-driven organization founded in 1990 and operating as a non-degree entity of Rensselaer at Hartford. CQC’s mission is to promote quality throughout every aspect of business, government, education, labor and the community to improve the quality of life for all residents in the Northeast region.

Lynn LaChance, Executive Director of CQC, is excited about working in partnership with the City of Hartford to help them undergo organizational change and achieve excellence. “CQC is proud to have the opportunity to work with Mayor Perez and his leadership team to bring about the changes needed for Hartford to become a ‘place of hope’. True change starts with a commitment from the top, and the Mayor has shown through his strong support of this project that he is dedicated in his quest to improve the quality of life for all Hartford residents and to ensure that Hartford becomes a role model for other cities to follow. CQC is honored to have been chosen to aid the city in their efforts’.

Tom Morrison, Finance Director for the City of Hartford stated, “The opportunity for department heads to come together to discuss the goals and vision for the City of Hartford felt good. If there’s no spirit of teamwork, it’s detrimental to the operation of the City.”

‘Now is the time for a new Hartford Renaissance, let’s shine bright so that other cities may want to follow,’ added Perez.